

Are you prepared for a weather emergency?

Thursday, April 9, 2015

Shreveport and Caddo Parish could soon be in store for severe weather, which includes a risk for flooding, hail, high winds, and tornadoes.

Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator advises citizens to be prepared for weather emergencies and make necessary preparations before it's too late.

Thunderstorms can bring heavy rains and flash flooding, strong winds, hail, lightning and tornadoes. In a severe thunderstorm, take shelter inside a sturdy building and stay tuned to a battery-operated radio for weather information.

If you are outdoors, avoid natural lightning rods such as tall, isolated trees in an open area or the top of a hill. Avoid metal objects such as wire fences, golf clubs and metal tools. If you are swimming, get out of the water and seek shelter. If boating, return to shore. Never go near or touch downed power lines which may be live.

At home, keep away from windows and doors, avoid use the telephone unless there's an emergency, and don't use electrical appliances.

Be familiar with weather terms such as tornado watch and tornado warning. A tornado watch means tornadoes are possible in our area. You should remain alert for approaching storms. A tornado warning means a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. If a tornado warning is issued move to a pre-designated safe place.

Remember that warning times may be short so discuss a weather emergency plan with your family in advance and determine what your safe gathering place will be.

"Lives are saved when individuals receive and understand the warning, know what to do, and know the safest place to go," Prator said.

If you receive a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately.

- Go to rooms nearest the center of the house or a basement or storm shelter if you have one.
- In a tall building, move to a stairwell or hallway.
- In your car, get out and lie flat in a low area. Cover your head.